

**From:** [Stanfield, Brooks](#)  
**To:** [Sheldrake, Beth](#)  
**Subject:** Flash Message - Magnesium Powder Explosion - Grand View, ID  
**Date:** Saturday, November 17, 2018 3:31:37 PM

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Beth-

See draft FM below. Note that there is some potentially sensitive information that we need to be thoughtful about in how we communicate. Although no one came out and said the missing worker was found deceased, the implication of them "believing that they found them under a debris pile that would need heavy equipment tomorrow to remove" was fairly clear.

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At approximately 0915 MST this morning an explosion occurred at the US Ecology Subtitle C disposal facility in Grand View, Owyhee County, Idaho. The explosion took place in a building used to process magnesium powder. It was estimated that approximately 7,000 pounds of magnesium powder were present in the building. Magnesium is an alkali metal and reacts strongly when coming in contact with water although the exact cause of the reaction was not initially known. The initial explosion was followed by a second explosion approximately an hour later.

Two workers from the facility were reported as injured in the explosion and as of 1200h local time, one employee remained missing. The building where the magnesium was located was significantly damaged and the explosion caused damage to several surrounding buildings, several of which also reportedly contained flammable hazardous waste. The fire burning the building where the explosions occurred was reported as smoldering but not active. There were no initial concerns about impacts to off-site air quality. The Incident Commander with Owyhee County Sheriff's office requested a bridge call through Idaho Office of Emergency Management to request Regional Response Team 3's assistance to (1) perform decontamination of the injured workers so they can be admitted to the local hospital for treatment, and (2) assist in the recovery of the missing worker. Although the damage from the explosion compromised US Ecology's ability to access and provide definitive information on the chemical contents of all surrounding structures, the IC reported that he was satisfied with the facility's response.

As of 1600h local time, the IC reported that RRT3 had completed decon of the two workers and that the missing worker was believed to have been located under a debris pile. It was determined that heavy equipment would be needed to recover the worker's body. This operation would take place tomorrow.

IDEQ and EPA continue to monitor the situation. Media coverage has been relatively high among local outlets. Some of the details reported in media related to exact times and number of workers involved conflicts slightly with what has been conveyed on conference calls with Incident Command.

Media Coverage.

<https://www.idahostatesman.com/news/local/article221841755.html>

<https://www.kivity.com/news/explosion-at-us-ecology-idaho-site-near-grand-view>

<https://www.eastidahonews.com/2018/11/explosion-at-u-s-ecology-idaho-site-near-grand-view/>

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